

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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China's Continued Import Ban on Japan's Food Exports

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Approved By:

Scott Sindelar

Prepared By:

Ryan R. Scott

Report Highlights:

China's continued import ban on Japanese food exports could create additional import demand for U.S. agricultural products.

General Information:

On April 8, China's General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection, and Quarantine (AQSIQ) decided to tighten its import ban on Japanese food products, largely due to ongoing detections of nuclear-related substances on imported products from Japan. China's Ministry of Environment reported that 30 out of 31 mainland provinces (with the exception of Yunnan province) detected low levels of iodine-131. Reportedly, this substance was found in three food samples: spinach products in Beijing, Tianjin and Henan; lettuce leaves in Jiangsu; and Swiss chard in Guangdong. The Ministry also reported that 21 provinces were exposed to other nuclear-related substances such as cesium 134 or cesium 137. As a result of these findings, China expanded its list from 5 to 12 prefectures in Japan as well as added to their initial list of banned products.

China's continued import ban will have a negative impact on Japan's agricultural exports to China, which increased 26 percent to \$670 million in 2010 (compared to \$529 million in 2009). Key exports to China largely included fisheries, seafood, and processed products. Due to the serious impact on retail sales of Japanese food products in China, credible retail managers, buyers, and traders stated that they will readjust their product spread to include a higher percentage of U.S. products. FAS/China field offices will continue to monitor this market development and inform the appropriate U.S. cooperators.

With the exception to Nagano, Saitama, and Tokyo, which are not agricultural producing areas, here are the remaining nine prefectures that China banned in Japan as well as the commodities that are produced and/or processed in their respective regions:

Fukushima:	Fisheries and Seafood, Radish, Carrots, Apples and Peaches
Gunma:	Cabbage and Konjacs
Tochigi:	Rice, Vegetables, Livestock, Strawberries, Chinese Chives, Pears, and Mushrooms
Ibaraki:	Fermented Soybeans, Watermelons, and Chestnuts
Chiba:	Vegetables
Miyagi:	Fisheries, Rice, Livestock, and Food Processing
Yamagata:	Cherries, Pears, Grapes, Apples, Peaches, Melons, Persimmons, and Watermelons
Niigata:	Rice, High Quality Sake, and Cut Flowers
Yamanashi:	Grapes, Peaches, Plums, and Wine